GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:277
ANSWERED ON:09.12.2002
ENCROACHMENTS ON FOREST LAND
BIR SING MAHATO;MANSINH PATEL

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government alongwith the State Governments are taking action for removing the encroachments on forest land;

(b) if so, the area thus cleared during the last three years and thereafter, State-wise;

(c) the area of forest land under encroachment at present, State-wise;

(d) whether the Union Government are aware that some of the forest officials in league with land mafias are indulging in encroachment;

(e) if so, the details thereof and action taken against the corrupt officials during the last three years, State-wise;

(f) whether attention of the Union Government has been drawn towards encroachments on forest land made by the land mafias as reported in Rashtriya Sahara dated August 16, 2002;
(g) if so, the details and facts thereof; and
(h) the concrete action plan prepared by the Government to check the encroachments on forest land and also for vacation of the encroached forest land?

Answer

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T. R. BAALU)

(a) to (h) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN THE REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (h) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 277 BY SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO AND SHRI MANSINH PATEL REGARDING `ENCROACHMENTS ON FOREST LAND` DUE FOR RE 09-12-2002.

(a) to (c) Yes Sir. The Union Government have issued directions to the various State / Union Territory Governments on 3-5-2002, to evict the encroachers from the forest lands in a time-bound manner. The State Governments are responsible for the operational aspects of the removal of encroachments. Recently, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Andaman & Nicobar Islands have informed that they have already initiated eviction process. According to the information received from the various States, the forest area under encroachment is around 13.5 lakh ha. at present. The State-wise data is enclosed as Annexure-I.

(d) No Sir. There is no report that the forest officials are indulging in encroachment on forest lands in the country.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) to (h) The Central Government is aware of the news item published in Rashtriya Sahara dated August 16, 2002. The report speaks of the problem of encroachment on forest lands and the report of the Central Empowered Committee submitted before the Hon`ble Supreme Court of India. The Central Government have devised a three tier mechanism to deal with encroachment problem and issued directions to various State/ UT Governments to constitute a Cell at the office of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests of the respective States/UTs, to plan and monitor the eviction of encroachments on forest lands on a continuous basis. Also, the States/UTs have been directed to form a Committee at the forest Circle level under the chairmanship of the Conservator of Forests comprising District Collector, Superintendent of Police as members to assist the Divisional Forest Officer in eviction of the encroachers. Further, the directions have been issued to the States/UTs to constitute a Monitoring Committee under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary, which may meet biannually to take stock of the situation and while monitoring forest encroachments, should also fix the responsibility of the field formations for their failures to prevent/evict encroachments on the forest lands. The Union Government is committed to remove the encroachments on forest land and the action in the field has to be taken by the State/UT Governments.

ANNEXURE -I

ANNEXURE IN RESPECT OF PART (a) TO (c) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.277 REGAR
`ENCROACHMENTS OF FOREST LAND` FOR REPLY ON 9-12-2002

Sl. No.	Name of State	Area under encroachment in sq.km.
1	Andhra Pradesh	3413.22
2	Arunachal Pradesh	40.38
3	Assam	2547.11
4	Bihar	21.77
5	Chhattisgarh	1504.95
6	Delhi	NA
7	Goa	10.12
8	Gujarat	54.84
9	Haryana	8.52
10	Himachal Pradesh	14.93
11	J & K	154.06
12	Jharkhand	339.05
13	Karnataka	1090.00
14	Kerala	459.70
15	Madhya Pradesh	728.11
16	Maharashtra	936.10
17	Manipur	0.003
18	Meghalaya	154.64
19	Mizoram	0.13
20	Nagaland	0.00
21	Orissa	756.96
22	Punjab	44.09
23	Rajasthan	175.84
24	Sikkim	120.00
25	Tamilnadu	182.83
26	Tripura	419.27
27	Uttaranchal	104.00
28	Uttar Pradesh	252.10
29	West Bengal	NA
30	A & N Islands	36.85
31	Chandigarh	NA
32	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	NA
33	Daman & Diu	NA
34	Lakshadweep	NA
35	Pondicherry	NA
	Total	13569.57

NA - NOT AVAILABLE